

VIA: ATR
(SPECIFY AIR OR SEA POUCH)

SECRET

DISPATCH NO. OELA-24,572

RYBAT
CLASSIFICATION

V.I.P. POUCH

TO : Chief, WE

DATE 25 June 1958

FROM : [] *DK*

SUBJECT: GENERAL— Liaison/JAGUAR

SPECIFIC— Irakli MENTESHASHVILI

1. Irakli MENTESHASHVILI, a Georgian resident in Britain since October 1946, applied for a U. S. immigration visa on 19 May 1958 at the U. S. Embassy here in London. A security check form was submitted in the normal fashion through [] Station to JAGUAR, but it was soon clear that this was far from a routine case. The JAGUAR case officer [] informed [] that Subject was an active D/A, aimed at the RIS, under JAGUAR control since March 1951, who had been cooperative and useful to them in the past. Through Subject, according to [] JAGUAR had been able to identify two previously unknown RIS officers in London, one of whom is currently studying in England as a Baptist theological student (we have been promised a separate report on this interesting aspect of the case, which has not yet been received.)

2. Subject's wife (Francesca nee CARA, born in Reggio Calabria, Italy, 12 February 1928) has relatives in the United States, and Subject informed JAGUAR that he had decided to apply for ^{an} immigration visa to the U. S. but would need their guidance and assistance in the security aspects of his application, due to his D/A contact with the Soviets. JAGUAR then (some weeks later) contacted us to inform us of Subject's background, to express their complete confidence in his reliability, and to request our assistance in both protecting to the extent possible the security of his past relationship with JAGUAR and by assuring that Subject was not in any way hindered in getting his visa because of his past work for them. In checking the Embassy records, we find that Subject's application would be processed under the Soviet Union quota, for which there is no waiting period, and he and his wife would be free to travel upon receipt of final clearance.

3. [] has provided the following background information on Subject. As can be seen it is very skimpy on the actual period of Subject's D/A work for JAGUAR. We will, of course, press for full details on this aspect of the case if Subject is to be granted a visa and allowed to enter the U. S. as an immigrant.

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4. Text of the JAGUAR report:

"MENTESHASHVILI was born in Tiflis, Georgia, on 10 March 1912, the son of a priest. After a normal State Primary and Secondary education, he studied electrical engineering at the Tiflis Industrial Institute, where he also received flying training. In 1933 he was placed on the Air Force Reserve with the rank of lieutenant and in 1937 obtained an engineering diploma. He was mobilized in June 1941 and sent to an Air Force unit but soon afterwards was transferred to the infantry because (he believes) he had attempted to conceal the fact that his father was a priest. In December 1942, his battalion (which he commanded) having suffered severe casualties in fighting in the Caucasus, he deserted to the German forces with 85 fellow Georgians.

"After loyalty tests and interrogations by the Germans, MENTESHASHVILI was sent as a stool pidgeon into P.O.W. camps, his job being to report on the suitability of Georgian P.O.W.s for employment by the Germans. By mid-June 1944 he held the rank of Oberleutenant with credentials issued by the Abwehr. Shortly before D-Day MENTESHASHVILI went to Berlin to discuss a proposition that a Georgian Air Force contingent should be formed from captured ex-Soviet Air Force Personnel. Nothing came of this scheme, however, and he was posted to a Georgian Cavalry Group and sent to Northern Italy, where at the time of the Italian Armistice he surrendered to the British. While in British custody he twice resisted the persuasion and threats of visiting Soviet repatriation teams and eventually through the good offices of a Georgian colonel of the Polish Anders Army got himself taken to the U.K. with the Second Polish Corps.

"MENTESHASHVILI had a variety of jobs in the U.K. after his arrival in October 1946, but in 1950 he obtained what proved to be more permanent employment as a draftsman. At about this time he was denounced to the Soviet Embassy by one TARUNASHVILI, a fellow Georgian, who thought (mistakenly) that MENTESHASHVILI had been an S.S. officer. As a result, MENTESHASHVILI was contacted by one Lyuba KOZLOVA, a clerk interpreter at the Russian Embassy, who after several meetings put him in touch in March 1951 with Vladimir Alexandrovitch LEGUEEV, Second Secretary at the Soviet Embassy. MENTESHASHVILI agreed to provide information about the Georgian emigre community in the U.K., after veiled threats had been made against his family in Georgia, in order to 'expiate his war guilt'.

"MENTESHASHVILI worked as a D/A under our control from the time of his first meeting with LEGUEEV until 1954, when contact was broken off by the Russians. In April 1958 he was recontacted by the RIS and was again given a brief about the Georgian community and again came under our control.

"MENTESHASHVILI is violently anti-Communist, as must be evident from this report, and his desire is to see the liberation of Georgia from the Soviets. He has refused to accept anything apart from a few small presents for his work on behalf of this Office."

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